

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 239  
By Bryson

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the employees and volunteers of the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center for laudable service to the people of Williamson County.

WHEREAS, as April is Child Abuse Awareness Month, it is proper that this legislative body formally acknowledge and thank the outstanding child abuse prevention organizations in our State whose employees and affiliates, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization is the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center, the purpose of which is to combat child abuse by coordinating services to children and their families in crisis and providing community education focused on prevention and early intervention; and

WHEREAS, the leaders at the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center are committed to reducing the trauma experienced by children who have been abused, to providing a child-friendly, safe environment where a child's voice is heard and respected, to coordinating sexual assault medical examinations and treatment with mental health counseling, to empowering non-

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offending parents to protect their children, to holding offenders accountable, to supporting the state-mandated Child Protective Investigation Team as it investigates all reported cases of child abuse and to providing professional training and community education concerning abuse prevention and early intervention; and

WHEREAS, founded in September 2000 in response to the growing number of child abuse cases in Williamson County, the center sponsors and houses a variety of programs to combat the abuse of children; and

WHEREAS, these significant and valuable services include a non-offending parents' support group, counseling services, an Adopt-A-Bear program, a Lending Library, a Kids Court Group and professional assistance in applying for monies from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund; and

WHEREAS, from July 2002 through December 2002, the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center served over 100 child abuse victims and their families, providing over 500 services to these families, including crisis counseling, support groups, therapy, case management, court support and emergency food and clothing aid; center employees also helped seventeen parents file for Criminal Injury Compensation on behalf of their child; and

WHEREAS, the employees and volunteers of the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center are skillfully assisted in the fight against child abuse by the able and committed employees of the District Attorney's Office, Child Protective Services and local law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, child abuse is an evil that crosses all racial and socioeconomic boundaries; in Williamson County alone, over 600 cases of child abuse and neglect were reported in 2002, and nationally one in every four girls and one in every five boys will be a victim of sexual abuse by the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause now in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud the employees of the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center for their dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the employees, volunteers and supporters of the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center for their dedicated, essential and compassionate service to the children and families of Williamson County and extend to them our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.